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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/828,754	04/21/2004	Joseph Patrick Salaniro	TH1006 05	5342
23632	7590	03/20/2006	EXAMINER	
SHELL OIL COMPANY P O BOX 2463 HOUSTON, TX 772522463			UPTON, CHRISTOPHER	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		1724		

DATE MAILED: 03/20/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/828,754	SALANITRO ET AL.	
	Examiner Christopher Upton	Art Unit 1724	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 21-38 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 21-38 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
  1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                    | Paper No(s)/Mail Date: ____.  |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date: ____. | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
|   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.                                    |

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., In re Berg, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); In re Goodman, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); In re Longi, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); In re Van Ornum, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); In re Vogel, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and In re Thorington, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 21-38 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 and 2 of U.S. Patent No. 6,776,910. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because instant claims 21 and 24 obviously comprise the subject matter of patented claims 1 and 2. The limitations of instant claims 22, 23 and 25-38 are fully disclosed by the patent, and would therefore have been obvious additions.

3. Claims 21-38 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-3 of U.S. Patent No. 6,808,632. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because instant claims 29-32 obviously comprise the subject matter recited in

claims 1-3 of the patent. The limitations recited in claims 21-28 and 33-38 are fully disclosed by the patent, and would therefore have been obvious additions.

4. Claims 21-38 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-3 of U.S. Patent No. 6,503,395. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because instant claims 36-38 obviously comprise the subject matter recited in claims 1-3 of the patent. The limitations recited in claims 21-35 are fully disclosed by the patent, and would therefore have been obvious additions.

5. Claims 21-38 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 4, 6, 12 and 13 of U.S. Patent No. 6,796,741. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claims 1 and 6 of the patent obviously comprise the subject matter recited in instant claims 36 and 21. The limitations of the other claims are fully disclosed by the patent, and are partially claimed in claims 4, 12 and 13 of the patent.

6. Applicant's arguments filed on February 16, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that the claims of the instant application are not obvious over the patented claims because the instant claims do not require delivery of a microbial culture. It is submitted that the patented claims comprise all of the steps recited in the instant claims, and that, therefore, the instant claims are obvious over the patented

claims. It is further submitted that the instant claims, while they do not require delivery of a microbial culture, do not rule out the addition of a culture in addition to the steps recited, due to the open "comprising" language of the claims. In addition, the instant specification discloses the addition of a microbial culture.

7. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Christopher Upton whose telephone number is 571-272-1169. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30-5:00, off every other Monday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Duane Smith can be reached on 571-272-1166. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Christopher Upton  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 1724